request on the received number of the point-to-multipoint messages is received from the station-side unit.

REMARKS

An Office Action was mailed on June 20, 2002. Claims 1 – 24 are pending in the present application. Claims 1 - 24 are amended. No new matter is introduced.

OBJECTED CLAIMS

Claims 1 – 20 are objected to for informalities relating to the inclusion of reference signs. Claims 1 – 24 are amended to delete these reference signs. No new matter is introduced. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the objection be withdrawn.

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 1 – 24 are allowable with correction of the above formalities.

CONCLUSION

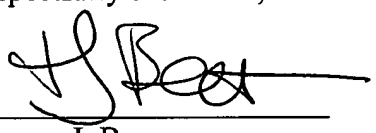
An earnest effort has been made to be fully responsive to the Examiner's objections. In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that claims 1 – 24, which include independent claims 1 and 15, and the claims that depend therefrom, stand in condition for allowance. Passage of this case to allowance is earnestly solicited. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in

condition for allowance, he is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Attached is a marked up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached pages are captioned **"Version With Markings To Show Changes Made"**.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged on Deposit Account 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



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Version with Markings to Show Changes Made – S/N 10/034,928

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the following claims as indicated:

1. (Amended) A communication system [(1)] including a plurality of subscriber-side units [(4-1 to 4-N: N is a natural number)] manufactured by respective desired vendors and a station-side unit [(2)] manufactured by a desired vendor accommodating the subscriber-side units [(4-i: i=1 to N)], the station-side unit [(2)] being capable of carrying out a point-to-multipoint communication with all of the subscriber-side units [(4-i)] by sending a message in a manner of point-to-multipoint communication,

the station-side unit [(2)] comprising:

a point-to-multipoint message generating unit [(2A)] for generating a point-to-multipoint message; and

a group designating message generating unit [(2B)] for generating a group designating message to designate some of the subscriber-side units as a component constituting a group of units which are to receive the point-to-multipoint message, and

the subscriber-side unit [(4-i)] comprising:

a point-to-multipoint message processing unit [(4A)] for receiving and processing the point-to-multipoint message from the station-side unit [(2)]; and

a state control unit [(4B)] for controlling, in response to a reception of the group designating message from the station-side unit, a status of the reception and the processing for the point-to-multipoint message in the point-to-multipoint message processing unit [(4A)] to a valid status.

2. (Amended) A method of processing a message for use in a communication system [(1)] including a plurality of subscriber-side units [(4-i)] manufactured by respective desired vendors and a station-side unit [(2] manufactured by a desired vendor accommodating the subscriber-side units [(4-i)], the station-side unit [(2)] being capable of carrying out a point-to-multipoint communication with all of the subscriber-side units [(4-i)] by sending a message in a manner of point-to-multipoint communication, wherein

the station-side unit [(2)] designates some of the subscriber-side units [(4-i)] as a component constituting a group of units which are to receive a point-to-multipoint message, and

only the subscriber-side units [(4-i)] designated as the component constituting the group of units are allowed to receive and process the broadcast message sent from the station-side unit [(2)] in the manner of point-to-multipoint communication.

3. (Amended) A method of processing a message for use in a communication system according to Claim 2, wherein the station-side unit [(2)] designates the subscriber-side units manufactured by an identical vendor as a component constituting the group of units.

4. (Amended) A method of processing a message for use in a communication system according to Claim 2, wherein the station-side unit [(2)] designates some of the subscriber-side units manufactured by an identical vendor as a component constituting the group of units.

5. (Amended) A station-side unit accommodating a plurality of subscriber-side units [(4-i)] manufactured by respective desired vendors, the station-side unit being capable of carrying out a point-to-multipoint communication with all of the subscriber-side units [(4-i)] by sending a message in a manner of point-to-multipoint communication, the station-side unit [(2)] comprising:

a point-to-multipoint message generating unit [(2A)] generating a broadcast message in a manner of point-to-multipoint communication; and

a group designating message generating unit [(2B)] for generating a group designating message to designate some of the subscriber-side units as a component constituting a group of units which are to receive the point-to-multipoint communication message.

6. (Amended) A station-side unit according to Claim 5 in which each of the subscriber-side units [(4-i)] is assigned with vendor identification information, wherein

the group designating message generating unit [(2A)] comprises

a first vendor group designating message generating unit [(2B-1)] for generating a vendor group designating message having the vendor identification information addressed to the subscriber-side units [(4-i)] manufactured by an identical vendor as the group designating message, whereby the subscriber-side units [(4-i)] are designated as a component constituting the group of units.

7. (Amended) A station-side unit according to Claim 5 in which each of the subscriber-side units [(4-i)] is assigned with unit identification information specific to each vendor, wherein

the group designating message generating unit [(2B)] comprises

a second vendor group designating message generating unit [(2B-2)] for generating a vendor group designating message having the unit identification information addressed to specific ones of the subscriber-side units [(4-i)] manufactured by an identical vendor as the group designating message, so that some of the subscriber-side units [(4-i)] are designated as a component constituting the group of units.

8. (Amended) A station-side unit according to Claim 5, comprising a group designation canceling unit [(2C)] for generating a group canceling message which cancels the designation of the grouping effected on arbitrary subscriber-side units [(4-i)].

9. (Amended) A station-side unit according to Claim 8, wherein

the group designation canceling unit [(2C)] is arranged so that, after the group of units is designated, if the station-side unit receives no reply message on the designation from the subscriber-side unit [(4-i)] for a predetermined period of time, then the group canceling message addressed to at least the subscriber-side unit [(4-i)] is generated.

10. (Amended) A station-side unit according to Claim 8, wherein

the group designation canceling unit [(2C)] is arranged so that, when a group designation canceling request is received from the subscriber-side unit [(4-i)], then the

group canceling message is sent to at least the subscriber-side unit [(4-i)] which has requested the group designation canceling.

11. (Amended) A station-side unit according to Claim 5, wherein

the group designation message generating unit [(2B)] is arranged in such a manner that, when a group designation request is received from the subscriber-side unit [(4-i)], then the group designation message generating unit generates the group designating message so that at least the subscriber-side unit [(4-i)] having requested the group designation is designated as a component constituting the group of units.

12. (Amended) A station-side unit according to Claim 5, wherein

the group designation message generating unit [(2B)] comprises a group identification information assignment message generating unit [(2B-3)] for generating an assignment message to the subscriber-side units [(4-i)] to be designated as a component constituting the group of units as a group designating message, whereby the subscriber-side units are assigned with the same group identification information, and

the point-to-multipoint message generating unit [(2A)] is arranged as a group identification information attaching type point-to-multipoint message generating unit [(2E)] which sends a point-to-multipoint message having the group identification information to the component constituting the group of units.

13. (Amended) A station-side unit according to Claim 12, wherein

the group identification information message generating unit [(2B-3)] comprises a vendor identification information giving unit [(2F)] for giving vendor identification information specific to the subscriber-side unit [(4-i)] to the assignment message, so that the subscriber-side units [(4-i)] manufactured by an identical vendor can be designated as a component constituting the group of units.

14. (Amended) A station-side unit according to Claim 5, comprising a point-to-multipoint message number confirmation requesting unit [(2D)] for requesting from the subscriber-side unit [(4-i)] so as to confirm the number of received point-to-multipoint communication messages.

15. (Amended) A subscriber-side unit accommodated together with other subscriber-side units [(4-i)] in a point-to-multipoint communication network handled by a station-side unit [(2)] which is manufactured by a desired vendor and capable of carrying out point-to-multipoint communication with all subscriber-side units [(4-i)], the subscriber-side unit [(4-i)] comprising:

a point-to-multipoint message processing unit [(4A)] for receiving and processing the point-to-multipoint message from the station-side unit [(2)], and

a state control unit [(4B)] for controlling, in response to a reception of a group designating message from the station-side unit [(2)] which designates the subscriber-side unit as a component constituting a group of units which is to receive the point-to-multipoint message, a status of the reception and the processing for the point-to-

multipoint message in the point-to-multipoint message processing unit [(4A)] to a valid status.

16. (Amended) A subscriber-side unit for use with other subscriber-side units [(4-i)] according to Claim 15, each of which is assigned with vendor identification information and accommodated in the network handled by the station-side unit [(2)] which is arranged to send a vendor group designating message attached with the vendor identification information to the subscriber-side units [(4-i)] so that the subscriber-side units [(4-i)] manufactured by an identical vendor are designated as a component constituting the group of units, wherein

the state control unit [(4B)] comprises

a first vendor identification information comparing determining unit [(4C)] for comparing the vendor identification information given to the vendor group designating message sent from the station-side unit [(2)] with the vendor identification information assigned to its own subscriber-side unit, thereby to determine whether or not the two pieces of vendor identification information are coincident with each other, and

if the first vendor identification information comparing determining unit [(4C)] determines that the two pieces of vendor identification information are coincident with each other, then the reception and the processing for the point-to-multipoint message in the point-to-multipoint message processing unit [(4A)] are brought to a valid status.

17. (Amended) A subscriber-side unit for use with other subscriber-side units [(4-i)] according to Claim 15, each of which is assigned with unit identification information

specific to each vendor and accommodated in the network handled by the station-side unit [(2)] which is arranged to send a vendor group designating message having a plurality of the unit identification information to the subscriber-side units [(4-i)] so that specific ones of the subscriber-side units [(4-i)] manufactured by an identical vendor are designated as a component constituting the group of units, wherein

the state control unit [(4B)] comprises

a unit identification information determining unit [(4G)] for determining whether or not the unit identification information given to the vendor group designating message sent from the station-side unit [(2)] contains the unit identification information assigned to its own subscriber-side unit, and

if the unit identification information determining unit [(4G)] determines that the unit identification information assigned to its own subscriber-side unit is contained, then the reception and the processing for the point-to-multipoint message handled by the point-to-multipoint message processing unit [(4A)] are brought to a valid status.

18. (Amended) A subscriber-side unit according to Claim 15, wherein the state control unit [(4B)] comprises a canceling control unit [(4D)] arranged in such a manner that

when the subscriber-side unit receives a group canceling message for canceling the designation on the subscriber-side unit itself as a component constituting a group of units from the station-side unit [(2)], then the reception and the processing for the point-to-multipoint message in the point-to-multipoint message processing unit [(4A)] are brought to an invalid status.

19. (Amended) A subscriber-side unit according to Claim 15, wherein the state control unit [(4B)] comprises a reply message returning unit [(4E)] which returns a reply message to the station-side unit [(2)] when the state control unit [(4B)] controls the point-to-multipoint message processing unit [(4A)] so as to bring the reception and the processing on the point-to-multipoint message to a valid status.

20. (Amended) A subscriber-side unit according to Claim 15, comprising a group designation cancellation requesting unit [(44-6)] for requesting cancellation of the designation on the subscriber-side unit itself as a component constituting a group of units from the station-side unit [(2)].

21. (Amended) A subscriber-side unit according to Claim 15, comprising a group designation requesting unit [(4F)] for requesting the designation on the subscriber-side unit itself as a component constituting a group of units from the station-side unit [(2)].

22. (Amended) A subscriber-side unit according to Claim 15 for use with a station-side unit [(2)] which is arranged to generate an assigning message for assigning identical group identification information to subscriber-side units [(4-i)] to be designated as a component constituting a group of units, and also generates a point-to-multipoint message which is given the group identification information and addressed to the group of units, wherein

the state control unit [(4B)] comprises

a group identification information holding unit [(73-2)] for holding the group identification information assigned by the assigning message sent from the station-side unit, and

a group identification information comparing determining unit [(74-1)] for comparing the group identification information given to the point-to-multipoint message sent from the station-side unit [(2)] with group identification information held in the group identification information holding unit [(73-2)], thereby to determine whether or not the two pieces of information are coincident with each other, and

the state control unit is arranged to carry out control in such a manner that, if the group identification information comparing determining unit [(74-1)] determines that the two pieces of information are coincident with each other, then the reception and the processing for the point-to-multipoint message in the point-to-multipoint message processing unit [(4A)] are brought to a valid status.

23. (Amended) A subscriber-side unit according to Claim 22 for use with a station-side unit [(2)] which is arranged to give vendor identification information specific to the subscriber-side unit [(4-i)] to the assignment message so that the subscriber-side units manufactured by an identical vendor can be designated as a component constituting the group of units, the subscriber-side unit comprising:

a second vendor identification information comparing determining unit [(4J)] for comparing the vendor identification information given to the assignment message with the vendor identification information assigned to its own subscriber-side unit, thereby to

determine whether the two pieces of vendor identification information are coincident with each other or not, wherein

if the second vendor identification information comparing determining unit [(4J)] determines that the two pieces of vendor identification information are coincident with each other, then the group identification information holding unit [(73-2)] holds the group identification information.

24. (Amended) A subscriber-side unit according to Claim 15, comprising:

a message counting unit [(74-2)] for counting a number of point-to-multipoint messages received by the point-to-multipoint message processing unit [(4A)]; and

a received message number notifying unit [(4H)] for notifying the station-side unit (2) of the counting result yielded by the message counting unit [(74-2)] when a confirmation request on the received number of the point-to-multipoint messages is received from the station-side unit (2).